

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HELSIN 00403 261112Z

42

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NIC-01 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8331

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, FI

SUBJECT: SOCIAL DEMOCRATS CHOOSE DELEGATES FOR JUNE
PARTY CONFERENCE

1. THE FINNISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HAVE SELECTED THE 360
REPRESENTATIVES FROM PARTY'S LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR
PARTY'S CONGRESS IN JUNE 1975.

2. SELECTION WAS MORE HOTLY CONTESTED THAN
NORMAL AND
ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF PARTY MEMBERSHIP CAST THEIR BALLOTS. OLD
LINE RIGHT-WING SOCIAL DEMOCRATS MADE A CONCERTED
EFFORT TO GAIN ENOUGH DELEGATES TO STOP LEFTWARD DRIFT
IN SDP BUT MET WITH RESOUNDING DEFEAT.

3. SO-CALLED PAASIO-SORSA LINE GAINED A CLEAR MAJORITY
OF DELEGATES. THIS IS GROUP WITHIN PARTY THAT CAN BE
CHARACTERIZED AS MODERATE-DENTER. THE MORE RADICAL
LEFT-WING ELEMENT IN SDP DID MAKE SIZEABLE GAINS,
BUT PROBABLY NOT ENOUGH TO GAIN ANY DECISIVE INFLUENCE
ON FORMULATION OF PARTY'S PROGRAMS AND POLICIES OR
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SELECTION OF LEADERSHIP AT JUNE CONGRESS.

4. LOCAL SDP ORGANIZATION IN TAMPERE, UNDER LEADERSHIP OF MAYOR PAAVOLA HAD BEEN LEADING THE FIGHT TO RETAIN PARTY ON ITS PRESENT COURSE. RESULTS SHOWED, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN IN TAMPERE SECRETARY GENERAL SORSA (PRESENTLY PRIME MINISTER) HAS A GREAT DEAL OF SUPPORT. AFTER ELECTION PAAVOLA MADE STATEMENT THAT TAMPERE LOCAL PREFERRED TO HAVE PARTY CHAIRMAN PAASIO CARRY ON BUT WOULD SUPPORT SORSA FOR CHAIRMANSHIP IF THIS NOT POSSIBLE.

5. COMMENT: QUESTION OF WHETHER PAASIO WILL MAKE HIMSELF AVAILABLE FOR RE-ELECTION TO CHAIRMANSHIP IS STILL OPEN. SHOULD HE STEP DOWN IT APPEARS CLEAR THAT SORSA WILL BE CHOSEN TO SUCCEED HIM. WHETHER PAASIO DECIDES TO RETIRE FROM LEADERSHIP MAY DEPEND ON WHOM SORSA AND HIS SUPPORTERS WANT AS NEW SECRETARY GENERAL. IF SORSA APPEARS READY TO GIVE IN TO PRESSURE FROM RADICAL LEFT WING FOR A SECRETARY GENERAL FROM THAT GROUP, PAASIO MAY DECIDE TO CONTINUE. RIGHT WING OF PARTY WAS TRYING BOTH TO PREVENT SORSA FROM GAINING CHAIRMANSHIP AND TO KEEP RADICAL LEFT WING OUT OF SECRETARY GENERALSHIP. IT SEEMS TO HAVE LOST ITS ANTI-SORSA FIGHT, BUT MAY STILL HAVE SUFFICIENT STRENGTH TO ACHIEVE ITS OTHER OBJECTIVE. TWO MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED POSSIBILITIES FOR SECRETARY GENERAL JOB ARE POLICY PLANNING SECRETARY LIPPONEN AND MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AHDE. IT IS NOT CLEAR AT THIS POINT WHETHER ELECTION OF DELEGATES INCREASED CHANCES OF EITHER ONE.
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